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ABSTRACT

This paper, on the state of inservice teacher education, is divided into five parts. The paper's first part, which focuses on the context in which teaching occurs and on the role of the teacher, points out that, while the common denominator in the study of teaching is the teacher/learner relationship, social issues also affect teachers and teaching. In the paper's second section, a profile is drawn of the current state of inservice education, including the magnitude of the endeavor, knowledge base, program content, program delivery, and evaluation. The third part of the paper gives examples of five high quality inservice programs and describes identified characteristics of effective inservice: client involvement, recognition of district and school needs, focus on instruction of children, skill-driven training, and in-class observation, feedback, and coaching. In the fourth part, three main high level issues confronting education today are examined: the politicalization of inservice education, lack of institutional commitment, and the problem of incorporating inservice into the responsibilities of elementary and secondary teachers. The final section of the paper presents a recommendation for the founding of an American Education Congress. A brief discussion outlines the potential strengths of such a Congress in bringing about consensual policy setting and monitoring of education, specifically teacher education. (JD)

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INSERVICE EDUCATION

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PREFACE

Early in the Spring of 1982, I accepted a commission to write a paper on inservice education for the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The paper, at the time of my original thinking, would consist of explications of the state of the scene in inservice education, some discussion concerning the strengths and weaknesses of current practices in inservice education, an analysis of the varying political positions attendant to inservice education, and finally, a series of recommendations would be constructed for the Commission to think about. Although my thoughts about the substance of the paper haven't changed much, an event occurred on May 12, 1982 that markedly altered the way I had been thinking about these topics. I had the opportunity to meet with some of the commissioners at a hearing, and I then had the opportunity to attend a hearing and to attempt to summarize the ideas that had been presented.

With very few exceptions, I was dismayed as I listened to the testimony. The serious scholar and program developer in inservice education can spend hours, or even days, explicating the issues and explaining to those who are interested about the problems that surround this complex activity. Unfortunately, those offering testimony at the hearing appeared to be more interested in presenting a specific politically-based solution to problems that had not even been explained. For example, such problems as inadequate preservice teacher education, unspecified and often elusive content, the need for training within the classroom during the working day, and the need for classroom followup on training were scarcely mentioned. The most pre-

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valent themes that were presented focused on the need for a particular type of governance structure as well as the need for more money. Frankly, my research as well as my observations have led me to believe that the governance issue is a red herring. Although I wouldn't object to having an abundance of money in support of inservice education, I doubt very much that large infusions of fiscal support are on the horizon, regardless of anyone's recommendations.

At any rate, recognizing that the commissioners--those who must make reasoned recommendations--are not experts in the field, I have decided to markedly alter the format and style of this paper in an attempt to provide what I consider to be the type of information, analysis, and recommendations that the commissioners will find helpful. Interestingly, the topics of the paper will remain fairly consistent with what was proposed last Spring. Rather, the discussion surrounding each topic will differ from the traditional "term paper" approach, as will the style for citing expert references. This paper will employ a type of annotated footnote rather than the traditional bibliographic entry. The purpose for this is that often in the field of education, the cited reference does not, in fact, support the assertion being presented, at least not in a direct fashion. Often, the citation is presented in support of the author's analysis of what the research meant. Thus, one cannot totally understand the importance of the citation without referring to the original work. Obviously, Commission members cannot be expected to devote the time and energy necessary to analyze and evaluate research on inservice education. Thus, I will attempt to offer some clarifying comments with each footnote that is used.

The "quality" of recommendations that were proposed at the Commission hearing in Atlanta on May 12 also perplexed me. I heard recommendations, such as, more money for science and math teachers, competency testing for teachers and for prospective teachers, and State enforced higher standards for those entering the teaching ranks. I was perplexed at the quality of recommendation that was offered, not because they were politically offensive to me, but because I don't think they would work. Consider, for example, that it would cost over two billion dollars to give each teacher in America a $1,000 raise. Furthermore, the $1,000 raise wouldn't solve even the relative wage and salary dilemma the teachers face. Consider that raising the standards for prospective teachers would only exacerbate the problem of fewer and fewer teacher education students, most of whom represent low academic potential when compared with their collegiate colleagues. Consider that if each beginning science or math teacher were to receive a $2,000 salary differential, that could still be $10,000 below the starting salary for those same people in another field. Highly specific and shortsighted recommendations not only probably will not work, but would, in my opinion, represent poor use of the forum that the National Commission on Excellence in Education has provided. Consequently, I will attempt to provide the substance for recommendations that address the issues in inservice education (and in education in general) at a level that would not be considered by anyone to represent immodesty on the part of the Commission members.

The decision to deal with the topic of inservice education at an elevated level has created some problems. Mainly, it is difficult to discuss

the issues attendant to inservice education without acknowledging that inservice education is, in fact, a subset of teacher education. Further, many of the major issues that are operating are issues for education in general, and if one attempts to delineate them only in relation to inservice education, one would create misperceptions on the part of the reader. Therefore, I found it necessary to deal with some of the issues that impinge on education, although special attention will be given to delineating the relationship of the problem to the field of inservice education.

The remainder of this paper will be divided into five parts. The first part will focus on the context in which teaching occurs as well as the role of the teacher, thus setting the stage for better understanding the issues surrounding inservice education. Following the context, a descriptive "state of the scene" will present as clear a picture as possible concerning the current status of inservice education. This will be followed by an explication of some of the exemplary practices that are occurring today, along with an explanation of why they are better than others that may, on the surface, look as good. There will then be an explication of some of the major problems and issues that confront those interested in improving inservice education. Finally, I will provide my best advice concerning recommendations that the Commission might offer that will be at a level of importance worthy of a National Commission, and still be understandable and feasible enough to warrant consideration by those with whom the Commission will want to communicate.

THE CONTEXT OF TEACHING AND THE ROLE OF TEACHER

I could go into great detail describing the world that teachers operate within, complete with the frustrations, the contradictions, and the impediments to an ambiance for excellence. Some of these problems have been created by the teachers themselves, others find their genesis outside the profession. I won't dwell on these topics, because they are not central to this paper. However, it is important to think about the world a teacher encounters prior to thinking about the problems associated with inservice education.

Teaching and Learning

In order to explore inservice education, it is necessary to anchor the excursion on the most bedrock element of educational activity--teaching and learning. The great common denominator in the study of teaching is the teacher/learner relationship and its innumerable forms of interaction. It makes little difference which level of education is selected for inquiry: public or private; preschool, elementary, secondary or post-secondary; undergraduate or graduate; professional or vocational. In all cases, the teaching/learning paradigm is at the core.

The important point when one considers the issues surrounding inservice education is that the centrality of this educational relationship is so deceptively simple that it often goes unnoticed. Even school administrators, the gatekeepers of our local educational institutions, are rarely trained in the observation and evaluation of teaching and learning. These administrators are not alone in their disregard. Research agendas set by the federal government as well as by private foundations and organi-

zations, place studies of teaching and learning far down the list of priorities; educational laws and regulations set at all levels rarely consider the potential impact of their meaning on teaching and learning; and, teacher education programs tend to develop around the pedagogy in specific content areas rather than on more generic variables related to how people teach and how people learn. The point is clear--the importance of the teaching/learning process in the practice of education gets lost in the shuffle.

Consider the problems involved in making content and curriculum decisions in inservice education, when many of the decision makers do not consider the teaching/learning paradigm at the core of the educational endeavor. It may sound absurd but, unfortunately, it's all too true.

A Complex World

One might think that the great majority of a teacher's professional effort is devoted to discovering and implementing effective learning programs for children. Perhaps that is the way it is; it certainly is the way it should be. However, a teacher's world is far more complex than most casual observers realize. Teachers appear to be facing an ever increasing number of interventions that make their professional lives more complicated, if not more difficult. At the same time, perhaps in response to these interventions, teachers themselves appear to be creating issues that make the primary responsibility of the instruction of children more difficult.

From the first day a novice teacher enters a school building, that teacher must learn to operate within a specific organizational structure.

The structure may vary greatly from the expectations a beginning teacher derived from previous experiences. Being a classroom teacher in a school is very different from being a student or even a student teacher. Often bringing an idealized notion of the role of a teaching professional, a fledgling teacher soon comes to realize that the relationship with a principal can be difficult; that the school district has a myriad of difficult to understand policies; that colleguial relationships are not as open as they should be; and that the goals of the institution often contradict good educational practice, e.g., music class must take place at its scheduled time each week whether or not that time fits into the flow of classroom activities.

Regardless, teachers soon learn. While a first-year teacher might be very concerned with adjusting his/her teaching style to the prepotent organizational demands, the tenured veteran has typically learned the tricks of the trade. New policies emerge, administrators change, but teachers typically adjust. The point, however, remains--being a lower level member of a highly structured school tends to inhibit autonomy in teaching.

Organizational concerns are not the only problems with which a teacher is faced. Certain kinds of educationally related social issues also impinge on the classroom. The impact of these issues on teaching and teachers tends to be additive, i.e., they arrive and become important more frequently than they leave and become unimportant. Adjusting to the demands of the social issues often becomes a major problem. This problem may be enhanced when a teacher perceives an expectation of personal commitment to one side of a social issue when a contrary view is actually held.

For example, many teachers viewed the programs designed to achieve desegregation in schools as dysfunctonal for the education of children, yet often didn't voice their displeasure for fear of being labeled racist when they didn't perceive racism as a basis for their critical position.

Social issues also tend to appear and develop with amazing rapidity. Who would have thought that in 1968, when teachers were coming through the last throes of the civil rights uprisings of the mid-60s and encountering tension in their classrooms relating to the war in Vietnam, that just ten years later they would be scanning their curriculum materials and constructing their lessons with great consideration for avoiding instruction that promoted the continuation of sex stereotyping? Who also would have thought that many teachers perform this task with something less than absolute certainty about what is "sexist" and what is not? The world changes quickly, affecting teachers at every turn. Even before the "sexism" issue was solved, teachers were concerned about how they dealt with and talked about handicapped children. It now would appear that multicultural and bilingual issues will consume a great deal of teachers' energies.

A sample of the social issues that have affected teachers and teaching over the past decade includes not only racism, sexism, and the war in Vietnam, but also bilingualism, multiculturalism, environmentalism, handicappism, and many others. To make matters more complex, some of these concerns have been magnified in their importance by either legislative or judicial action. Hence, teachers are encountering mainstreaming (PL94-142), Title IX (Equal Opportunity for Women), and a variety of court-

imposed desegregation plans.

A teaching professional's world is even further complicated by a seemingly endless array of more localized political and economic issues. Many teachers have come to expect, for example, that an increase in the interest rate is likely to result in the defeat of school budget and bond issues. The recent passage of many Proposition 13-type laws may be testimony to the accuracy of this belief. Regardless, by virtue of the very close linkage of the operation of schools to a local voting district, teachers are often placed in the position of having to "walk on eggs" in an effort not to disrupt the small edge of political support that the schools may enjoy.

The current public dissatisfaction with schools is no skeleton in education's closet. Rather, the media have made abundantly clear that achievement is dropping, some teachers may be functionally illiterate and, while all this is occurring, costs are rising. This type of information, whether it is true or not, has often made convenient fodder for the campaign gristmill of many local, state, and even federal politicians. Right or wrong, many teachers believe that their profession has been unfairly blamed--though in many cases the teachers themelves do not understand the reasons why this has occurred. These issues--organizational, social, and political and economic--make the teaching professional's world exceedingly complex and has, undoubtedly, contributed to the growing strength of teacher organizations. Although teachers must assume accountability for the actions of their organizations, there certainly has been solace and solidarity through membership. It is also likely that many teachers

hang onto their organization for security, while either ignoring, or perhaps denying the political and sometimes educational dysfunctional positions that are taken. Although teachers, represented by their organizations, have taken to speaking out on many aspects of society that affect their lives, many critics view this increased political activity as related only to improving teacher welfare.

Whether the issues confronted by teachers are born from the society in which we live, or are a product of the teacher's own behavior, they are nonetheless complex and difficult to cope with. Remembering that the teaching/learning relationship gets lost in the shuffle, note this description of a teacher's world and think about how difficult it would be to operate within--

> "Imagine an elementary teacher who is competent to teach reading, communication skills, and mathematics; can organize and manage a self-contained classroom with 30 youngsters; is able to identify specific learning problems and to help children overcome them; is competent to assess learning, evaluate programs, and record and communicate evaluative information to appropriate sources; can build into programs strategies for inculcating basic values such as honesty, respect, and patriotism; integrates culturally pluralistic material in the curriculum (bilingually, if necessary); can manage and instruct handicapped children in the classroom; is competent to purge the classroom environment of sexism; has undergone personal growth processes and is competent to help children do the same; can deal with social/political/philosophical controversies in education; and who can do all of the above with a sensitivity to the rights of 20 to 30 children."[1]

In spite of the world in which they operate, many teachers desire and expect to attend primarily to the learning needs of children. Scratch the surface of many a harried teacher, and one will likely find a person who usually wants to do nothing more than what is best for his/her students. One will also likely find a person who does not spend a great deal of time

contemplating their professional growth and development--a condition which I believe creates many of the issues relevant to inservice education.

The Role of Teachers

One would think that an understanding of the teacher's environment would quickly lead to an understanding of the role of the teacher. Unfortunately, that's not the case. In fact, it's likely that the confusion in the world of teaching feeds the longstanding problem of trying to determine the role of education, hence the role of teachers. To the casual observer, this may seem like a simple and self-evident condition. Unfortunately, after years of debate and dialogue, little progress has been made toward the development of a precise understanding of why schools exist, why children attend, and thus, what teachers are supposed to do. Benjamin Franklin once offered the observation that schools are supposed to teach things that are useful, and on some occasions, teach them things that are ornamental. It seems that only the words have changed--today we talk about skills and frills. Over the years, there have been many educators who have concerned themselves with the role of schools and teachers. John Dewey viewed schools as a miniature society representative of the larger society and its institutions.[2] Stressing the need for the child to learn to function in a democratic community, Dewey believed schools should provide well-designed and flexible instruction aimed at capturing the natural curiosity of the child.

Ivan Illich, a contemporary social critic, believes along with Dewey that education is inhibited by a highly structured educational establishment.[3] Unlike Dewey, however, Illich finds the problem inherent in the

institution of the school, its curriculum, and teaching techniques. Rather than a tight bureaucratic organization, Illich believes the school should be a loosely federated community activity.

Similar points of view have been well publicized over the past several years. Like Dewey, Glasser believes in encouraging the democratic ideal.[4] He argues for the initiation of programs that foster student to student interaction, and that build self concept. He develops this notion further by acknowledging that society has shifted from a goal orientation to an orientation based upon the role of the individual. He argues that schools should begin to reflect this shift in societal values in their approach to students, teaching, and learning. Once again, schools are seen as a miniature society.

John Holt argues that children learn the difference between getting an education and learning to play the game of going to school.[5] He views the school, and especially the classroom, as a battleground, with teachers and students as warriors. Holt claims that the teaching/learning activity becomes one of maneuvering and manipulation on the part of both participants. Not all commentators, however, dismiss a highly structured academic program emphasizing basic skills. Hyman Rickover advocates just such a foundation to education, laced not only with basic skills, but also with other academic content areas.[6]

Thomas Green examines the role of the school by providing avenues of analysis and foundations upon which to build discussion regarding the purpose of schools.[7] He offers no solution to such an intricate analysis but does provide questions concerning the separation of community from society

and the urgency with which they must be addressed. He notes the discrepancy between the involuntary values of society which schools espouse, and the values of the community, which may be in conflict with those offered in educational institutions. Green's analysis is the razor's edge of the discussion of teaching and learning and underscores the complexity in the world of teaching.

Joyce and Harootunian view the teacher as a problem solver.[8] From their perspective, they begin to enumerate five processes which they believe comprise teaching: (1) making and using knowledge; (2) shaping the school; (3) teaching with strategy; (4) creating interpersonal climate; and (5) controlling and teaching personality. These processes offer a wide angle view of the teacher on the job and the often conflicting demands placed upon him/her.

Finally, if one looks at the role of teacher through the eyes of parent, taxpayer, or citizen, one gets a much simpler view. As Howey, Yarger, and Joyce pointed out, citizens appear to want teachers with the following characteristics-

> .The ability to teach basic skills, including reading, mathematics, and communication skills (in the secondary schools they want content).
> .Teachers who operate classrooms in schools that are neat, orderly, and run in a well-managed, almost businesslike manner.
> .Teachers who can provide specific remedial treatments for children who are having difficulty.
> .Teachers who can perform evaluations that are publicly communicated in straightforward terms, and
> .Teachers who pay attention to basic values (e.g., honesty, respect, patriotism, etc.).[9]

I have thought about the complexity of teaching, the role of teachers, and have asked myself, "With this knowledge, what kind of inservice

training would be appropriate?" The answer, obviously, is not easily obtained. In fact, one can probably develop a better understanding of inservice needs by looking at what we know concerning the effects of teaching.

Teacher Effects

In my opinion, we have a major problem in societal perception if one even needs to ask the question, "Do teachers have an effect on children?" Of course they do! Each of us can reflect on some level of effect that one or more of the teachers we have encountered in our history have had. Not only have they taught us (we could measure this on an achievement test), but they have inspired us, counseled us, irritated us, and in many other ways shaped our lives. One of the major problems confronting us today, as we think about inservice education, is the extent to which we should look toward research for answers to our questions concerning the form and content of programs. If we attempt that activity, we soon discover that much, if not most, of the research tends to be reductionalistic, and tends to limit thinking about the effectiveness of teachers only in terms of standardized test scores, usually in reading and mathematics.

For the sake of building a strong case that teachers are important, do make a difference, and thus have an important role, I will stick with the limited research on teaching that typically relates only to observable behavior or to learning behavior that is inferred from achievement test scores. Even in this far too limited domain, it is possible to build a rather strong case that teachers are, in fact, very important people in the lives of children.

It would not be appropriate for me to go into great detail concerning the research--books have been written about this. Rather, I will refer the reader to only two sources, and make some generalizations from my study of those sources. If one were to ask a scholar for the single, most comprehensive source of information on research on teaching, particularly of recent vintage, the likely recommendation would be Duncan and Biddle's The Study of Teaching.[10] This is a detailed, comprehensive volume covering the entire field of research on teaching that was written for advanced graduate students in education.

If the casual reader finished the Duncan and Biddle book, and then requested a book that was less comprehensive, yet more definite about research that relates teacher behavior to student learning, the most likely recommendation would be Medley's Teacher Competence and Teacher Effectiveness.[11] Medley started out with 732 pieces of literature. From that, he culled 289 studies which purported to shed light on the question of teacher effectiveness. The 289 studies were filtered through a screen of four separate criteria, and only 14 studies survived. These are the studies that are reported in his monograph.

I will not take the time to discuss each of the studies that Medley reports, nor will I go through the Duncan and Biddle book on a chapter by chapter basis. Rather, I will offer my analysis concerning some of the important information to be learned from reading those publications. I hasten to add that what I am about to provide is an example of using expert citation to support a point that may not be as clearly evident in the literature as it appears to be in this paper.

In other words, one can't ascribe the reasons for making general statements to a single source. Rather, one must read a great deal, and from all of the reading that has been accomplished, one must then construct concepts that are more powerful than the single source. The following paragraphs will reflect on my perceptions, and will focus on what I think can be safely said about the research on teaching.

It appears that we have an interesting condition in the field of research on teaching where from one perspective we don't know a great deal, while from another perspective we know a great deal more than we have adequately communicated. Thus, from a more positive position, it would seem that there are some generalizations from the knowledge about teaching that could be helpful to practitioners, to researchers, to policymakers, and to bureaucrats.

There is probably no such thing as a totally accurate conclusion or generalization in the area of research on teaching. But then, that probably characterizes any field that must deal with information about human beings in a natural environment. Nonetheless, the lack of certainty about research results has not stifled the development of policy or practice in many human service fields, and it should not in the area of teaching. For example, although controversy still exists about the effect of smoking on human health, there has been no reluctance to develop policies concerning the smoking behavior of our citizens. Even though there is no way to judge accurately how a foreign nation will operate in the future, we have no reluctance to develop defense policy and all of the necessary machinery to

implement that policy. Such should be the case with teaching. Although we cannot be absolutely sure about every generalization that can be made, we are much further ahead to act intelligently on those things that seem to be supportable rather than to ignore them and to continue to operate on the basis of conventional wisdom, experience, historical position, and political ideology. With that in mind, the following conclusions derived from the research on teaching seem appropriate.

1. There are more than sufficient data to suggest that teacher behaviors do relate to student behavior and to student learning--teachers do make a difference.

2. Single variable (oversimplified) teacher behavior research is outdated, and probably will add little to the knowledge about teaching in the future.

3. Teacher behavior should probably be thought of as constellation or groups of behavior that can infer a more all-encompassing teaching style.

4. Very different teaching skills relate to student learning at different grade levels and in different content areas, e.g., straightforward, fact-type questions are more effective with younger children than with older children.

5. Teachers whose behavior relates to achievement gain scores in one content area are likely to produce achievement gain scores in other content areas and are likely to have students who possess more positive attitudes toward school as well as toward themelves.

6. Some of our "sacred cow" teaching practices (e.g., higher order question asking, encouraging student freedom of expression, etc.) may be ineffective in producing student learning.

7. Most positive reinforcers are effective for controlling student behavior.

8. We know much more about how teachers and children interact than we know about how children behave in seatwork settings where they spend a great majority of their time.

9. We know precious little about the way teachers manage interaction between children and instructional materials. We know less about the nature of materials.

Although these conclusions may not appear earth-shattering at first glance, they could easily be used as guidelines in the development of inservice programs. A more thorough study of the literature would provide insights concerning the content of these programs.

The Problem(s) to be Addressed

The picture I get when I think about the context for teaching, the role of teacher, and teacher effects is that of a very diffused life, one that's difficult to understand, and one that's impossible to describe in a single sentence, or even in a single paragraph. At the same time, the obvious public dissatisfaction with teachers and teaching that has come to the fore lately has led to a condition where the profession is trapped. Most often, critics and the media prefer to talk about the competence of teachers within the constraints of their ability to demonstrate that children can achieve well in reading and math, and can score well on high school exit tests such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The decrease in the ability of schools to demonstrate proficiency in this area has been blamed almost exclusively on teaching, while other societal influences have been either ignored or understated, e.g., television, the narcissism of the late 60s and 70s, the influence of non-school social issues. In short, it appears that schools, teachers, and teaching have lost a great deal of credibility. The problem has, in my opinion, been exacerbated by the concommitant rise in militancy as evidenced in the growth of teacher unionism. In other words, teachers have moved from a position of respected civil servant through a position of uncertainty to a position of adversary with the

society they are to be serving. It truly is an untenable position.

To me, there is no question that teachers must focus on those things that parents and citizens demand, i.e., basic skills, solid content, basic values, etc. Many teachers, perhaps most, will contend that they never left that orientation. At the same time, teachers need to do other things well. They need to be concerned with the psychological well-being of their students, they need to care about citizenship, they are justified in wanting the support of their communities. And, until the teacher organizations, in conjunction with other educational groups, can be provided with a forum for dealing with these issues that allow them to save political face, little growth is likely to occur.

If the continuing response to the problems in teaching, teacher education, and specifically to inservice education are mandates for involvement and required scores on a variety of different types of competency tests, the most that one can hope to achieve is to raise either the teachers' competency test scores, or those of children, a few points. It appears fruitless to set the raising of a third grader's score on a reading achievement test by two-tenths of a grade level as a goal. This would not deal with the issue of declining standards in any real sense, and it would only reestablish norms that would fail to be met in the future. Educational achievement should not be viewed as a continuous growth industry, even though that mentality pervades and is perhaps at the core of our economic foundations.

When I boil this all down, I am faced with a single, overarching problem. There is a desperate need in American education for coalescence

by all those groups and individuals whose life's work is education around the task of honestly facing the problems that exist and attempting to find ways to work together to solve them. In this instance, I am talking not only about classroom teachers and their organizations, but about education bureaucrats, school administrators, boards of education, and university professors and schools of education. The steps taken thus far in recognition of serious educational problems have been legislative and in some cases judicial. Unfortunately, those within the profession have either not had the opportunity to "own" the problem, or have not taken the opportunity if it has been presented. Until that occurs, we will be left with an adversarial relationship both within the profession and between the profession and the society that supports them, and there will be little or no movement beyond simple mandates that reflect shortsighted and highly specific answers to politically irritating though probably educationally unimportant questions.

I hope that my taking the time in this paper to establish a context and do a rather personalized analysis of the problems and issues confronting American education has not detracted from the initial and important charge--looking at inservice education. However, it is my contention that it is impossible to think about the problems confronting inservice education at a level that behooves a National Commission, without in fact, looking at the larger picture of teaching, teachers, and schools. The analysis presented thus far will provide the grounding for and will direct the rest of this paper, which will, in a real sense, focus more narrowly on inservice education.

INSERVICE EDUCATION--THE STATE OF THE SCENE

Hopefully, I haven't created the image that inservice education is not an important issue. Truly it is, particularly in the 1980s. Although no one would deny that inservice education has been important for a long time, many factors seem to merge at this point in American educational history to underscore its importance today. First, the teachers who are in classrooms with children today will also be there tomorrow. In a recent survey of more than 8000 teachers in three states, the following demographic picture emerged.[12] The "typical" teacher is a woman in her mid-30s. Chances are about even that she has a master's degree and the odds are even greater that she has achieved permanent certification. The typical teacher has taught for about 14 years. Inasmuch, then, as most teachers do not need additional credits in order to advance toward either master's degrees or certification, the historic reasons for inservice education have lost their potency.

Recently, the public media has begun to assail not only the educational competence of students in public schools but the competence of their teachers as well. The litany of complaints is all too familiar: students can't read, test scores are declining, student violence is on the upswing. In short, to say there is a heightened interest in the capabilities of American teachers would be euphemistic. Who could ignore, for example, Time magazine's effort, which brought attention to inadequacies of classroom teachers?[13] Although the Time article was not a direct assault on teacher education, it certainly raised the question of how allegedly illiterate teachers are getting into classrooms. Lyon has addressed this question very specifically and has placed the blame squarely on teacher

education.[14] These recent articles are cited only as examples of the current media interest in teacher competency--an interest that has led, quite naturally, to increased political interest in inservice teacher education. Notwithstanding the defensive reaction of the teaching profession, one would be hard pressed not to acknowledge that the media blitz has created yet another reason to look closely at the field.

The current interest in inservice education and the recent phenomenon of a teacher surplus have unfortunately removed the focus of teacher education from the initial preparation for teachers. Preservice programs have clearly suffered from a lack of attention. A 1977 study highlighted the inadequacies of preservice teacher education.[15] For example, in many states it takes more hours of classroom instruction and supervised practice to become a hairdresser than an elementary teacher--and elementary teachers receive twice as much preparation as secondary teachers. To make matters even worse, the structure and content of preservice teacher education programs are heavily embedded in state regulations and certification requirements, and not amenable to rapid change. What emerges is yet another pressure to look seriously at inservice education and recognize its importance.

Finally, it is important to recognize the genuine interest that many practicing classroom teachers have in programs that will help them work with children more effectively. This point has been underscored by a study of 37 federally funded teacher centers.[16] One of the characteristics of these teacher centers has been voluntary participation by clients. In the typical project, there were 330 instances per month of voluntary par-

ticipation in programs that reflected the interests of teachers. Thus, it is apparent that when teachers perceive the content of inservice education to be resporsive to their needs, they participate in droves! Teacher interest in teacher centers is important for many reasons. It provides what may be the beginning for a truly professional culture, i.e., teachers willingly participating in their own professional involvement. I contend that this "professional culture" is a serious deficiency in today's educational picture. Additionally, it should help mute some of the cynical views concerning classroom teachers held by the public. Parenthetically, even though teacher centers became lost in a battle involving teacher unions and governance, it is my contention, after studying them for three years, that the governance and political issues were vastly overstated. It appears to me that most teachers who participated in teacher centers ignored the politics, and were genuinely involved in their own staff development in a number of ways.

In short, although no one would deny the historical importance of inservice teacher education, many factors have recently converged to underscore its contemporary importance. These factors include not only the demographics of the teacher population but also public perceptions of the competency of both students and teachers, recognition of the shortcomings of preservice teacher education, and finally, and perhaps most importantly, the interest that teachers themselves have demonstrated in improving their professional skills.

Magnitude of the Endeavor

It is impossible to determine precisely how massive the enterprise of inservice education truly is. Nearly half of all teachers in the United States hold a master's degree, and a surprising five percent hold doctorates. Most inservice education is provided by colleges and school districts, and it is estimated that there are 70,000 to 80,000 education professors, supervisors, and consultants presently engaged as full-time or part-time inservice instructors. That roughly provides a ratio of nearly one instructor for every 25 to 30 teachers presently employed. If one were to add those professionals who can be assumed to have some responsibility for inservice training, such as administrators, non-supervisory instructional personnel, and others, one can arrive at a figure of one inservice professional for every 10 to 12 teachers in the country. And these dramatic estimates do not include the teachers themselves--who may represent the single most important category of inservice instructors.

If each of the 2.1 million teachers in America were to take just one college course per year and there were approximately 20 students per class, there would be more than 100,000 college classes devoted to inservice education. If all of these classes were equally divided among the approximately 1500 colleges and universities that prepare teachers, there would be approximately 70 inservice courses per year per institution. Truly, there are many more people engaged in inservice education than has generally been thought; the programs have a myriad of forms, and the enterprise operates on a major scale.

Knowledge Base

I hope that, by now, you're asking yourself, "Well, what does research tell us about inservice education?" The truth of the matter is that research is limited. Existing knowledge is typically in the form of program descriptions and hortatory statements, and those who wish to implement inservice education must often rely on the conventional wisdom of practitioners. However, there is probably more knowledge available than can be tapped; the form of this knowledge is typically often not a part of the traditional methods of professional communication. Program descriptions are abundant in the literature and provide inservice educators with an almost unlimited supply of ideas and information. Unfortunately, most program descriptions are not necessarily bound to data, and frequently serve the single purpose of advocacy for a specific program.

Case studies share many characteristics of program descriptions. However, they are typically written for the purpose of conveying accurate information about inservice programs. Case studies have a specified methodology; and some type of evidence (e.g., documents, interviews, personal observations) is usually presented. Although more limited, one can find some good case studies that will allow them to learn about specific inservice programs.

One can always look for well-executed surveys and experimental as well as quasi-experimental studies concerning inservice education. The truth of the matter is that inservice education has never been a high priority item for research funding, and the productivity has historically been quite limited. This problem is exacerbated by the methodological problems confronted when one attempts to perform quality research in a field

setting.

An important point to consider about the conditions of existing knowledge in inservice education is that there exists a tremendous problem of language precision; the literature is dominated by hortatory and advocative program descriptions; and studies that are generalizable and/or replicable are rare. Reliable research is simply insufficient to justify a claim of a body of research knowledge, although there is no lack of "paper." Those trying to learn about inservice education must rely heavily on their critical reading skills, as well as on the experience and wisdom of inservice educators.

Now that I have attempted to build a case that our knowledge base is very limited, I am going to switch my tactic and point out that inservice education, like the rest of education, suffers from an inability to use even the relatively meager amount of research that is available. Using critical selection procedures, and even more critical reading skills, it is possible to piece together a fairly understandable picture of at least the program content and delivery forms that predominate in inservice education.

Program Content

As stated earlier, I find it necessary to make creative inferences in order to patch together an estimate of what constitutes the content of inservice education. With the exception of a single study, no reliable information regarding content appears to be available.[17] In this study of 37 federally supported teacher center projects, the data are quite clear. When teachers are involved in program development, as they were in teacher centers, they put the focus on pedagogical skills--those that will make it

possible for them to work effectively with children in classrooms. Additionally, teachers request and involve themselves in inservice programs related to basic skill areas, particularly reading and mathematics (although writing is also emphasized). Interestingly, woven through all areas selected by teachers is a priority on materials development. It is clear that one of the richest prospective content areas, traditionally ignored by inservice education, is teacher-made instructional materials for children.

No systematic study of the content of college programs targeted at inservice teachers has ever been conducted. But if one looks at the college catalogs focusing on graduate programs for teachers, two content areas emerge. First, one encounters the "general education" courses that are typically required for a degree: educational psychology, educational research, and others. Second, a large number of courses are related to career change: for example, educational administration, reading, guidance, and counseling. It is interesting to note that most graduate school catalogs (for the master's degree particularly) do not have a plethora of courses that would approximate the content interest expressed by teachers in the previously mentioned study.

An inspection of certification requirements yields little more insight.[18] It is only recently that state departments of education have begun to place important restrictions on which courses may or may not count toward achieving permanent certification status. Historically, as long as teachers earn graduate credits, these could be applied toward mini certification requirements. More recently, however, state departments of

education are requiring that teachers justify the content of courses related to certification, typically demanding that they should be in the "tenure or professional" area. In most cases, the content of inservice teacher education one can infer from state certification requirements is not dissimilar to what is found in college catalogs. In fact, state certification requirements and college programs are often logically and practically related.

Although local school districts are noted for their lack of activity in inservice education program development, there are so many school districts that one must look at the content of their programs in order to better understand the field. With notable exceptions, (e.g., Los Angeles, California and Lincoln, Nebraska) a typical school district may offer only two or three inservice programs per year. Often these programs are directly related to district goals: for example, a new K-12 writing program, district-wide discipline, or record keeping as prescribed by state law. Interestingly, school district programs seldom focus on direct aid to teachers in classrooms related to their ongoing task of instructing children.

Finally, one can look at federally sponsored inservice programs to obtain some sense of content, at least historically. With the exception of the Teacher Centers Program, most federally sponsored inservice programs are categorical in nature; i.e., they have emanated from a larger federal program designed to help a very specifically defined population. Thus, the bulk of the inservice programs sponsored with federal funds have been directed toward helping teachers achieve such goals as understanding the

instructional needs of the economically disadvantaged, the culturally different, the handicapped, and, more recently, the gifted and talented. Although few would deny the importance of developing inservice programs in these categorical areas, many critics have pointed out that their narrow specificity of content tends to isolate and fragment them, and make their development very costly.

Obtaining valid information about the content of inservice education is risky business at best. Often tied to college credit, certification, and/or degrees, much of the inservice education encountered by teachers focuses on either general degree requirements or career change programs. Less available are district programs focusing on specific district priorities and federal programs emerging from categorical legislation. Finally, when the needs of teachers as perceived by teachers are highlighted, pedagogical skills, curriculum areas, and instructional materials development emerge as the important content areas.

Program Delivery

Whenever I go to meetings of inservice program developers, I always hear seemingly endless debate concerning the need for variety and creativity in program delivery. The truth of the matter is, there are very few options. In fact, by studying inservice education, one can develop some fairly discrete categories that allow one to classify quite simply the range of delivery formats. Interestingly, when one does get into discussions, they are plagued by the problem of imprecise communication noted earlier. Regardless, a general decription of delivery formats includes five types: long-term programs of interrelated courses; long-term

courses; short-term courses; individualized plans; and self-directed plans.

Long-term programs of interrelated courses. Long-term programs of interrelated courses in inservice format are almost always exclusively related to the pursuit of advanced college degrees. Typically, programs of interrelated courses are designed to help teachers develop new skills, perhaps in quest of a career change. These efforts may be related to certification requirements and to salary increments. There is little reason to believe that such programs would exist if they were not required or the source of real and tangible benefits for teachers. They are not the format of choice for teachers looking for support in their daily activities.

Long-term courses. Teachers frequently enroll in long-term courses (usually at a college or university) even though they are not enrolled in a specific program. Often, these courses are related either to certification requirements or to salary advancement. Sometimes they are part of a teacher-developed program to learn new skills. Regardless, long-term courses are not usually designed to offer direct aid to teachers in classrooms, and are almost always attached to either a requirement or to an inducement.

Short-term courses. Short-term courses, usually meeting only two or three times, are less likely to be attached to any kind of requirement or incentive than are the long-term courses or interrelated programs. Data from the teacher center study suggests that they are a format of choice. Teachers quite willingly become involved--

particularly if a short-term course is designed to help them learn a specific skill that can be used in the classroom. Short-term courses emerge unevenly in the inservice domain because they typically have no institutional base; that is, it is difficult to garner "line item" financial support for this type of program. Thus, they frequently emerge in alternative programs, in federally funded programs, and in those few school districts where extensive inservice programs have, in fact, been developed.

Individualized support. Probably the most startling finding of the teacher center study was that teachers were served more frequently through individualized help than through group activities such as courses. It is clearly a delivery format of teacher choice, and is typically exercised through provision of direct consultative services, facilitative services (matching teachers with resources. providing instructional materials), and materials and equipment for developing instructional materials. Unfortunately, individualized inservice education is labor intensive and therefore costly. Also, like short-term courses, this type of format lacks an institutional base. It does appear, however, to be a high priority with practicing elementary and secondary teachers.

Self-directed learning. Finally, one cannot ignore the self-directed inservice education that characterizes any profession. Not only do teachers subscribe to magazines, purchase books, attend lectures, and think about their work; they also take educational trips, form informal study groups, and participate in a myriad of events that

are self-directed and personal. It is impossible to estimate the pervasiveness of self-directed learning. Those involved with inservice education have been and are developing new and creative formats for serving their clients. Probably the most important point to remember, however, is that only programs of interrelated courses and courses taken separately are embedded in an institution and thus assured of support that guarantees survival over a long term.

Evaluation

The success of inservice education can be examined at three levels: judgments by the teachers themselves, researchers' measures of the effects on teachers' behavior and measures of how learned teacher behavior affects students. At the first level, there is a great deal of evidence; at the second, there is enough evidence to support some very clear positions; and at the third, productivity has been virtually non-existent.

In a thorough examination of evaluation results of inservice teacher education programs, Lawrence discovered several important characteristics.[19] However, it is important to note that almost all of the nearly 100 studies cited by Lawrence depend on participant perceptions. Although Lawrence's conclusions are probably valid, they are not confirmed either by demonstrated learning on the part of participating teachers or by improved learning on the part of children.

Lawrence's major conclusions were (1) that individual inservice education tends to be better than single offerings for large groups;

(2) that programs requiring active involvement tend to be better than those requiring passive-receptive involvement; (3) that demonstration of skills with supervised feedback tends to be better than provisional skills to be stored for future use; (4) that teacher help teacher programs tend to be better than teacher work alone programs; (5) that inservice training integrated into a large program tends to be more effective than one-shot affairs; (6) that training that has an emergent design, with teacher input, tends to be better than totally pre-planned training; and (7) that self-initiated training tends to be more effective than prescribed training.

Joyce and Showers look specifically at the effect of training programs on the behavior of teachers.[20] Although they reported dismay with the "spottiness" of the literature, they did review more than 200 studies and were able to develop some interesting conclusions: for example, teachers can utilize feedback in training to develop both simple and complex teaching skills and strategies, and to implement curriculum; teachers also have the ability to respond to auto-instructional methodologies quite rapidly. However, Joyce and Showers implicitly raised the question that McDonald and Davis raised explicitly: Is it possible for teachers to integrate the skills learned by inservice training into the repertoire of classroom behaviors so that they can use them over a long period of time?[21] This is a difficult question to answer, and clearly demands more research in the future.

Finally, Medley, in his summary of the teacher effectiveness literature, clearly demonstrates that some teacher behavior does affect student

learning.[22] He also wrestles with the problem of teacher education programs and their relationship to student learning. In his view, one must separate the evaluation or research questions into two distinct questions. First, as Joyce and Showers ask, can inservice programs produce demonstrable effects on teacher behavior? Second, can teachers who exhibit certain behaviors have a measurable effect on the learning of children? Medley cautions about attempting to jump from measures of teacher training to measures of student learning--the technical problems are grotesque. Rather, Medley's work suggests "linked" studies in which demonstrations of teacher learning are evident before the question is asked concerning student achievement. This domain of linked studies constitutes the null set in evaluations of the success of inservice teacher education. It is probably an area that will demand activity in the future, but at this point simply does not exist.

Summary

Although this has been a fairly length section in my paper, I felt it was important. Delving into the substance of inservice teacher education is an adventure. The state of existing knowledge is less than one would desire, leaving little choice but to speculate and make high inference judgments. Although inservice education does have context, is delivered in some format, and serves several purposes, the ability to learn about it and to communicate about it succinctly and with certainty is difficult in the early 1980s.

Knowledge about inservice education, however, does lead one to specific problem areas, and that, of course, can translate into specific recommendations. I will offer these recommendations later. However, I keep thinking about, and will keep reminding you about, the fact that inservice education must be considered within the larger context of education in the United States. Thus, simple solutions probably don't exist. As H. L. Mencken once said, "There is always a simple solution to a complicated problem, and it's nearly always wrong."

EXEMPLAR MOMENTS IN INSERVICE EDUCATION

The use of the word "moments" in the above subtitle is both intentional and meaningful. I want to stress to the Commission members that even though there are high quality inservice programs in this country, and even though some of these programs do reflect the best in professional practice, these programs nonetheless represent only a small fraction of the inservice that is occurring. Because no institution has accepted or has been charged with the responsibility for inservice education, it tends to happen in very standardized forms across the country. College courses and a limited amount of large group school district inservice constitute the great majority of the formal inservice activities for America's teachers. As I describe some of the exemplar activities, it is important that you keep in mind that these high quality programs represent the exception rather than the rule.

It's important for you to understand what I use as criteria for high quality inservice programs. Some of the things that I, as a long-term

inservice program developer, value do not show up on other people's lists, and did not show up at the Commission hearings on teaching and teacher education on May 12. Perhaps I should start with three issues that will not be mentioned as important criteria. First, I will not mention adequate financial resources, these are assumed. One cannot have a quality program at no cost. Thus, it seems unnecessary to devote time to explaining that money is needed in order for high quality educational programs to exist. Second, I will not mention acceptability of program content to teachers as a requirement. This, too, is assumed. It is ludicrous to think that classroom teachers, with their relative isolation (or autonomy, depending on how one perceives it) would ever seriously implement programs which they do not view to be helpful to their students. Adults, especially those in an educational setting, simply do not "learn" and implement things that they do not want to become involved with. Finally, governance will not be mentioned as an important criteria for high quality inservice programs. It is both my observation and my analysis of the research that the governance issue is vastly overstated. It is, from a political sense, very important, of course. However, there is little reason to believe that focusing on the necessity of a particular governance structure ever did much to improve (or harm) the quality of inserv-ice education.

The following, then, represent what I consider to be important characteristics of quality inservice education--

. Client involvement. I view client involvement as important, not as a governance issue, but as a substantive issue. Inservice program developers can learn a great deal about the needs of clients by com-

municating with them and involving them in the planning process. Additionally, clients can learn about the importance of acquiring specific skills that might otherwise have never been thought about. It only makes good sense to stay in close contact with the client, particularly as they are mature adults, if one desires to have maximum impact with an inservice program. It should be noted that I would not reduce this involvement to a legalistic or adversarial structure. Rather, I would promote it as a colleguial relationship, with the full understanding that the inservice program developers have the responsibility for providing training that is both credible and relevant to those who will be learning.

- Recognition of district and school needs. Whether one likes it or not, schools, school districts, school administrators, state boards of education, and others have a legal and legitimate voice in the content and curriculum of public schools. They also have a less prominent but equally important right to have some control over the process. Thus, because the school district, and in some cases the school, are the legitimate units of training, it is incumbent on the inservice program developer to pay particular attention to addressing those needs that are perceived by schools and school districts to be important. In other words, school administrators and selected citizens have an important and legitimate role in the inservice process.

- Focus on instruction of children. I do not view educational programs that attempt to broaden the individual and to provide experiences that might otherwise not be encountered as inservice education. If the program is not designed to help classroom teachers improve their instruction or other interaction with the children, they should probably come under a different aegis. In most cases, inservice education should focus on the improvement of instructional skills for teaching children.

- Skill-driven training. This may be considered to be an elaboration of the last point. I think inservice education should focus on actual things that teachers can do in classrooms with children that are designed to improve the educational process. Typically, this means skills! I won't quibble that there might be some exceptions, but that does not distort the main point that professional training must be professionally based, i.e., we wouldn't consider a program on the analysis of medieval literature to be inservice education, except for teachers who teach medieval literature on a regular basis.

- In-class observation, feedback, and coaching. This criteria may be the most important of all, and certainly is the characteristic most lacking in inservice education. In the same way that we would not expect an experienced surgeon to utilize a new procedure without

> "hands on" clinical experience, we should not expect a teacher to do the same thing either. Typically, inservice education has consisted, at its best, of the introduction of classroom skills, usually on a college campus or in a school building when there are no children present. Rarely, if ever, does one find a situation where teachers are given the opportunity to practice the new skill under the supervision of an expert. At a minimum, teachers need to be observed and critiqued, need to receive accurate and helpful feedback, and need actual coaching in the classroom either from an expert or from their experienced peers as they learn to implement a new skill. It is only when this occurs that we can come to expect that newly learned skills will, in fact, be used in the classroom.

I don't pretend that these criteria are acceptable to all. They are, however, reasonably devoid of politics, ideology, and content. They reflect my views concerning what would be important before I were to invest either my energy or my resources in a serious inservice education program.

Based on the above criteria, I will describe some things that I know to be happening around the countryside that I think are important, and of high quality. Not every example will satisfy each of the criterion above at a level I would like, but they all address one or more of the criteria in a high quality fashion. I have not limited this description to "programs." Rather, they range from a federal program (now defunct) through state programs down to local initiatives. I think you will understand why each selection was made as you read the description.

Exemplar Inservice Education

Due to shrinking enrollments, the Binghamton, New York Public Schools found it necessary to consolidate two high schools, close two elementary schools, and renovate one of the closed high schools for purposes of a middle school (a new grade level configuration for the district). The Board of Education, with foresight and with adroit leadership on the part of the central administration, recognized that although architects and

contractors could achieve the physical changes, additional attention and revenues were necessary to meet the human needs created by the extensive change in the district. Toward that end, committees were formed that had representatives from the citizen groups, the administration, and the teachers. These committees were not seen as governance mechanisms, but rather as information generating and disseminating organs. Additionally, a local university was contacted and asked to coordinate and offer substantial aid in the planning process for all of the inservice education that would be occurring over a three-year period. At the time this paper is being written, the Binghamton schools are about one-and-a-half years into their inservice plans. There has been substantial work with the high school teachers, designed to help them make maximum use of the renovated high school they will be entering in the Fall of 1983, as well as extensive work with those teachers who will be working in the middle school (previously junior high and elementary school teachers). The inservice education is all the result of extensive planning, taking advantage of the variety of committees that were mentioned earlier for information, as well as for dissemination to the various interested parties. Although no one would take the position that every problem that could be dealt with through a good inservice program has been covered, it is clear that when the major transformation takes place, the school district will be in a stronger position to encounter problems that occur than they would have been without the extensive planning and inservice education.

The brief description above meets several of the criteria listed previously. Client involvement is obvious, and the involvement is at the

substantive level rather than at the political level. The programs that have come from the Binghamton project and those that will come in the future recognize district and school needs. In fact, it was the foresight of those working at the district level that gave birth to these extensive programs. Although the content of the programs has been quite varied, much of it has sufficient focus on the instruction of children. There has been, however, little skill-driven training or instances of observation, feedback, and/or coaching.

Some years ago, at the Center for the Study of Cognitive Development within the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin, the idea of the "multi-unit" school was born. In essence, this organizational plan for elementary school buildings was a radical (at least by conventional standards) attempt to reorganize schools for the benefit of children. The plan involved a variety of possibilities for organizing teachers and children into new configurations. This, of course, resulted in a variety of team teaching and cooperative teaching approaches. Additionally, communication systems were developed that provided school administrators with more direct input from teachers concerning not only needed inservice education, but other school needs as well. Since the inception of the multi-unit school idea in the 1960s, many schools, particularly in the mid-West, have profited from using part or all of the organizational ideas that were conceived. Inherent in nearly any bona fide attempt to implement a multi-unit school is a continuing need for inservice education. Toward that end,

and with the aid of the Kettering Foundation, inservice education programs have been developed and implemented at many sites.

Although some multi-unit schools have been short-circuited, often because of collective bargaining, a great deal that has occurred during the past 20 years is of an exemplar nature. Not only does the inservice education that emanates from a multi-unit school organization recognize district and school needs, the inservice programs are, de facto, sensitive to the needs of clients. Although some of the program content has been of the "process" variety, a great deal of the inservice program that has been developed for implementation in multi-unit schools focuses on the instruction of children. It has, however, been somewhat short in the use of in-class observation, feedback, and coaching.

Two interesting and exemplar approaches to inservice education have occurred at the state level. Achieved by different means, and impacting teachers very differently, both are noteworthy and offer insights into how states might approach the problem of inservice program development. Recently, the State of Oklahoma passed a rather startling and fairly rigorous law concerning teacher education. The state law, which will not be discussed in its entirety in this paper, requires a one- to three-year period of support and inservice training for novitiate teachers. This is an individualized approach to teacher education, and clearly takes into account the needs of the client. Additionally, the law requires school districts, teacher organizations, and universities and colleges to work together in the process of aiding a new teacher in professional development areas. It is difficult to comment on the content of the inservice that

will emanate from this new law, as it is just now getting its first test, and the recommendations for helping fledgling teachers will, in fact, be very individualized. Additionally, the State of Oklahoma has appropriated resources in support of this labor-intensive activity.

I do question whether or not the labor- and cost-intensive approach to teacher education in the State of Oklahoma, far more complex than has been described in this paper, can survive over the long haul. History has demonstrated to us that state governing bodies are prone to focus on quality in teacher education only when there is an abundant or over-abundant supply of teachers. The Fisher Act in California in the early 60s is an example of this problem.[23] If, as predicted, we find ourselves soon in a condition of teacher shortage, it is likely that standards concerning competence and process will be weakened. Such was the fate of the law in California. It boils down to an acceptance of the notion that citizens will not allow classrooms to go unattended, i.e., if there aren't enough well-qualified, competent teachers available, others will be hired.

The State of California, by way of institutional contract, has and continues to promote quality staff development in many schools. Using the ideas and programs conceived of by Bruce R. Joyce and his colleagues, a multiplier approach has been used. When this occurs, small numbers of teachers from selected schools and areas are trained in very specific pedagogical skills. These same professionals are then provided with the training necessary to allow them to train others. Thus, when the teachers return to their home sites, the training can continue, and other teachers can take advantage of the process. This type of training is important,

because the work of Joyce has focused on the instruction of children, is skill-driven, and makes extensive use of observation, feedback, and coaching.

Finally, the now defunct federal Teacher Centers Program provided many instances of exemplar inservice education. The bulk of the inservice programming that emanated from federally-funded centers was short-term, highly focused, and highly relevant to classroom teachers. Although this type of programming did not meet the criteria of meeting district and school needs as well as some other approaches, there was clear commitment to client involvement, and a great deal of the inservice education focused on the instruction of children. There were not sufficient examples of in-class observation, feedback, and coaching, although they did exist in some sites. Probably the most important aspect of the Teacher Centers Program was the sensitivity to clients and the high level of client credibility that program developed.

Teacher centers are a good example of the point made earlier concerning the lack of substantive importance of governance structures. There was little evidence in the data that emanated from teacher centers that the governance structure had much impact on program development.[24] Unfortunately, federally funded teacher centers were born out of extensive lobbying by teacher organizations, and with the recent change in administration, were "consolidated." The fact that teacher centers became politically unpopular and did not maintain viability should not deter from the important lessons that were learned and from the exemplar practices that emerged. Their political life is truly a case of "live by the sword,

die by the sword," and, as with so many other politically conceived programs, little attention was paid to the substance and quality of programs that emerged.

These five brief examples were presented so that you can have a flavor of some of the high quality inservice programs that have emerged and are currently operating around the country. Although some of these programs do not operate as extensively as they have in the past, they all represent approaches to inservice education that take into account important substantive issues. Although these examples do not characterize the bulk of inservice education that occurs in the United States, they have occurred in sufficient magnitude to suggest that it is, in fact, possible to create programs of high quality.

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN INSERVICE EDUCATION

There exists an almost endless array of technical and/or substantive issues and problems that could be discussed at length. They are not appropriate for this paper, so I have chosen not to include them. Succinctly, the technical and substantive problems could, for the most part, be categorized under the criteria I established for quality inservice education, i.e., client involvement, recognition of district and school needs, focus on the instruction of children, skill-driven training, and in-class observation, feedback, and coaching. It made little sense to me to go into detail, for example, concerning the fact that most skills learned by teachers in inservice programs are never implemented effectively in classroom, because teachers have not learned to incorporate them into a repertoire of teaching behavior. Instead, I have chosen to address

problems that I believe to warrant the attention of a body as important as the National Commission on Excellence in Education. These include the politicalization of inservice education, the lack of institutional commitment, and the problem of incorporating inservice into the responsibilities of elementary and secondary teachers.

Politicalization of Inservice Education

As I noted at the onset of this paper, most of the testimony at the Commission hearing on teaching and teacher education focused on governance and finance--items of interest to political constituent groups. Little if any of the testimony focused on the substance of inservice education. I believe this to be the case because most of the people who were selected to testify represented specific groups, and did not bring to the Commission a history of knowledge and experience in the field. Interestingly, none of the testifiers were teacher educators. It is difficult for the commissioners to obtain a solid grasp of the substantive problems if none of the resources available to them focus on those areas

What has occurred, particularly over the past few years, has been an increasing interest in inservice education by those groups that purport to represent some faction of the education establishment. This has probably occurred because as teacher surpluses mounted, as it became evident that classroom teachers were young, well-credentialed, and well-degreed, it was only logical to assume that a portion of the interest in teacher education would switch from the preservice training of teachers to the inservice arena. This interest was at least partly justified by the development of federal programs and in some cases state initiatives for inservice educa-

tion. Obviously, attendant to federal programs and state initiative is the illusion if not the actuality of fiscal resources. It would be helpful to look at some of the orientations that have evolved from this politicalization of inservice education. I would hasten to add, however, that they are fairly simple to understand and easily predictable.

The teacher surpluses of the 70s coupled with the media attack on teaching has resulted in dramatic drops in enrollment in undergraduate programs in schools, colleges, and departments of education. Administrators in these institutions have been faced with the unpleasant responsibility of cutting back programs and in many cases faculty, because their revenue is directly tied to the number of students who are enrolled. Additionally, schools, colleges, and departments of education have been seeking strategies for enrolling new students. One strategy has been to expand the orientation of the academic unit to other human services such as social work, nursing, and community service. Another has been to attempt to "move into" the inservice domain.

In a sense, universities have had their foot in a door for a period of time. They have typically been the stockholders in advanced degree and certification programs that brought practicing teachers onto the campus. These programs, however, have been soundly and probably justifiably criticized for their lack of relevance to the life space of an elementary or secondary teacher. Enrollments have been dropping in this domain as well, because teachers have been completing their certification and degree requirements at a very young age (somewhere in the mid-30s). All of this has set the stage for the standard university position on inservice educa-

tion, i.e., state regulation and national program, complete with fiscal support for inservice programs that result in the generation of credit hours for schools, colleges, and departments of education.

At the same time, these institutions have shown more flexibility than has historically been evident. There appears to be more willingness to tailor courses to meet the needs of teachers, to focus on school problems, and to move from the campus into the classroom in order to offer their services. The hard rock position, however, demands that these institutions generate credit hours of instruction if they are to remain viable. Interestingly, tuition revenue has been the currency of exchange for colleges for many years, and these institutions have been less than creative in finding other ways to offer their services while maintaining their fiscal viability.

Teacher organizations, interestingly, have faced a slightly more complex problem. On the one hand, in order to maintain credibility with their constituents, teacher organizations have voiced continual support for inservice education. On the other hand, it does not take a financial wizard to understand that if a local union contract negotiates significant amounts of money in support of inservice education, that leaves less money to support salaries, fringe benefits, and in some cases jobs. Caught on the horns of this dilemma, teacher organizations have focused, and probably will continue to focus, on the generation of resources for inservice education at the state, and to a lesser degree, the federal level. It is important for the teacher organization to have discretionary funds earmarked for inservice education that cannot be earmarked for other purposes.

When this occurs, the teacher organization is in a much stronger position to support inservice education. Until that occurs, teacher contracts will probably continue to demonstrate a paucity of commitment to inservice education. In fact, this "commitment" is likely to be restricted to statements concerning the provision of either released time or stipends for teachers who engage in school district inservice offerings, or to salary advancement for additional college credits.

This analysis should not be taken to be critical of teacher organizations. They truly are on the horns of a dilemma. I would think that it would be considered a demonstration of bad faith for teacher organizations to attempt to negotiate local resources into inservice education when, in fact, many of their members are being fired because of fiscal limitations. It would help, however, if the teacher organizations could be a little more open in their position, though to do so would be to risk some support from their membership.

Although there are a variety of mechanisms around the country through which states control their educational systems, whatever mandates emerge are transferred to the state education department for implementation. I believe that the "state position" on inservice education can best be understood by analyzing the manner in which the bureaucracy operationalizes a mandate or law. I realize that laws interact with regulations and implementation strategies contrived by bureaucrats, but the fact of the matter is that the implementation of any state law or regulation concerning education is interpreted through the eyes of powerful bureaucracies.

Although state bureaucracies typically promote themselves as being

facilitative and supportive of innovation, change, program development, and all other "good" things in education, they too often operate as overseers and gatekeepers of the funds. Although this bothers many, it doesn't particularly bother me, because in actuality, the state education department has the responsibility for monitoring educational programs within the state. Nonetheless, one must look into the mentality of the bureaucracy and the bureaucrats to best understand the politicalization of inservice education.

Bureaucracies, like legislatures, respond almost directly to political influence. Thus, one will find a great deal of difference from state to state concerning the view of inservice education. In the northern, industrialized states, one is likely to find a much stronger labor presence, and thus a much more "union sensitive" orientation toward inservice education. In the southern and in the agricultural states, the orientation is likely to be more "administratively oriented."

Regardless, state bureaucrats tend to think in terms of master plans, and evenly distributed programs. It strikes me that it would be bothersome to a state bureaucrat if local initiative produced inservice programs that were superior at one site, with inferior or no inservice programs available to other teachers in the area or in the state. Probably for that reason, states tend to favor statewide plans for inservice education, typically monitored, operated, and funded through regional state offices, often called boards of cooperative educational service, service centers, or county boards of education. Further, they tend to favor regulations and mandates which prescribe specific amounts of inservice educa-

tion for teachers.

States typically do not support these initiatives with large amounts of money. More often, the state will urge, coerce, or even mandate that other monies flowing from the state be diverted from their original purpose in support of inservice education (this phenomenon occurs in many other areas as well). I have always thought that nothing thrills a state bureaucrat more than to have a neat and tidy plan, covering the entire state, and ensuring that each and every teacher has the opportunity to engage in a specified amount of inservice education. In actuality, I have rarely seen any concern about the effectiveness or content of the program that emanates from this structure.

Local school districts are probably the most interesting party when it comes to analyzing the political positions concerning inservice education. For the most part, local school districts have shown little interest in controlling inservice education, or in even having inservice education as part of their responsibility. This has probably occurred because local school officials often view the state education agency with some disdain, complaining that they are receiving more and more mandates to achieve specific things with fewer and fewer resources in support of those mandates. They, like the teacher unions, are not terribly excited about negotiating inservice education into local labor contracts. It is my judgment that most local school districts are content to utilize the small amount of time provided by a variety of states (usually two or three days per year) in support of what they call staff development. Typically, these days will be utilized for large group presentations, sometimes followed by grade level

meetings. Although one can identify a distinct minority of visionary school administrators who work hard for the development of appropriate inservice programs, they should not be considered to be part of the mainstream of school district thought on the topic.

If I have made this brief discussion on the political orientation of vested interest groups on inservice education seem depressing, that's because I believe it is. I also believe that the existence and development of inservice program continues to be undirected and operates at the whim of political interaction for yet another reason. No institution has yet accepted or been charged with the responsibility for inservice education.

Lack of Institutional Base

Inservice education has often been referred to as the illegitimate child of education. What is meant by this is that none of the established educational institutions view inservice education as a primary responsibility. This has led to either benign neglect, or to political infighting for control, depending on whether or not fiscal resources were at stake. When there has been no "push" from either state or federal programs that offer resources, very little attention is paid by any group to inservice education. When the real or imagined availability of funds is present, then it always amazes me how committed institutions become--almost overnight.

School districts view their primary mission as the education of elementary and secondary children. Further, they take the position that colleges and universities are supposed to train teachers, and they are supposed to hire already competent professionals. Thus, although they

recognize the importance of updating and keeping current in one's field, they, at the same time, absolve themselves of most responsibility for inservice education. An analysis of nearly any school district budget will provide eloquent testimony to this fact. It has been well established that miniscule amounts of local budgets are directed toward inservice education.[25] This fact becomes more notable, and perhaps ironic, when one pulls out the time-worn comparisons between inservice education for elementary and secondary teachers, and inservice education sponsored by business and industry. It is not unusual for major corporations, particularly technological enterprises, to invest eight to ten percent of their operating budget in programs roughly equivalent to inservice education for teachers. Conversely, it is rare for a school district to invest more than one-half of one percent of its local operating budget in that domain.

Preservice teacher education programs are campus-based, and usually the students are enrolled full-time. Thus, it is not startling to note that a great deal of the teacher education effort within a school, college, or department of education focuses on preservice students. Inservice education students, usually those obtaining advanced degrees or meeting certification requirements, typically come one or two nights a week, and may enroll in a four- to six-week summer program. Professors have less contact with them, and often barely get to know them at all. Because these students do pay tuition, and demand very little attention, master's degree programs in schools of education have typically been seen as a source of revenue rather than a source to expend revenue. In other words, schools of education, like school districts, have not assumed the major responsibility

for program development in inservice education.

I don't consider state departments of education or teacher organizations as viable "homes" for inservice education. Neither of them are established institutions, and both have roles that would conflict with an emphasis on quality inservice education. Teacher organizations must have as their primary responsibility the welfare of their membership. State education departments must have as their primary responsibility the implementation of laws and mandates, and the monitoring of educational programs. Thus, it would be very difficult for either group to assume, in a real sense, the primary responsibility for inservice education.

Political considerations have in the past, and continue today, to impede any movement toward a single institution assuming responsibility for inservice education. Any attempt by a state bureaucracy or governing body to vest an institution with this responsibility, particularly if it includes fiscal resources, is met with strong political opposition by those who view themselves to be left out of the picture. When this occurs, and it has in many cases, one usually finds a state directive that establishes some type of collaborative group and, in essence, tosses the hot potato into the midst of this "collaborative effort." Lack of progress is likely, because when the two groups bicker and negotiate, with no institution being held accountable for program development, it is difficult to hold feet to the fire for lack of program development.

Inservice Education as a Professional Role

I mentioned in an earlier section the variety of factors that impinge on a teacher's working life. Clearly, a motivated teacher is a very busy

person who has a difficult time keeping up with all that is demanded of him/her. Unfortunately, not included in those things that impinge is a commitment to or responsibility for continuing professional improvement. It is true that teachers must take courses to be permanently certified, and frequently this leads to a master's degree. However, all of that can occur within the first three to five years of a teacher's career. Thus, it is likely that a teacher can be technically completed with his or her education by the age of 25. The problem, then, is that inservice education and continuing professional growth is not part of the role of teacher, and attendant to that problem, is the simple matter of time for involvement.

It is very difficult for school districts, even if they so desired, to provide sufficient amounts of time for ongoing inservice education. This is the case even when school districts are implementing new curricula and new programs, and desire to have that time available. The simple matter is that a school administrator desiring to find time for inservice education runs up against the legal requirements of the state and the union contract of the teachers. This markedly limits the ability of a school district to develop inservice programs, particularly if the school is attempting to address specific problem areas.

Traditionally, inservice education has occurred after school, occasionally on weekends, and during the summer. It has also typically been paid for by the participant. Simply stated, this piecemeal and part-time approach to inservice education, administered selectively (not all teachers are equally involved) is not nearly sufficient to provide adequate ongoing education for our nation's teachers.

Obviously, it is necessary to re-think the responsibilities of classroom teachers. Part of the obligation of anyone assuming a position to instruct children must be to take whatever steps are necessary to maintain an involvement in continuing professional development. This, however, cannot take place until it becomes possible to re-think the structure of schools and to re-think the manner in which a teacher's time is allocated. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that this could ever happen by administrative or legislative fiat, but rather must involve a serious dialogue on the part of a great number of constituencies before the problem can even be understood, let alone addressed.

Summary

These three problem areas, the politicalization of inservice education, the problem of institutional ownership, and the problem of inservice as a teacher role constitute what I consider to be the main, higher level issues confronting the field today. I take the position that the technical and substantive issues that were not discussed in this paper could all be solved if the overarching issues that have been presented were honestly and appropriately addressed. The last section of the paper will attempt to think through how these problems might be addressed, and will offer advice to the Commission members concerning the recommendations they might make to the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OTHER GRATUITOUS COMMENTARY

I have already made it clear that I do not think problem-specific, concrete recommendations are worthy of a National Commission on Excellence in Education. Not only that, I don't think most of the types of recommen-

dations that I heard at the Commission hearing on May 12 in Atlanta will work. One cannot mandate improvement in teaching and teachers any more than one can mandate world peace or an end to cancer. When one is dealing with a field so intimately tied to the human psyche and the human mind, one is limited to using the arts of persuasion and the development of proper ambiance and environmental conditions for real progress to be made. Consequently, I will not offer that type of recommendation in this paper. I will not urge the Commission to recommend that inservice content be more closely related to the instructional role of teacher. I will not advocate for a recommendation concerning more in-class support for inservice education. I will not urge commissioners to recommend that inservice education ought to address serious long-range teaching problems. I think these and a host of recommendations like them that could legitimately be presented will be better dealt with if the more overarching issues are addressed. I submit to you that these more overarching issues include the politicalization of teacher education, its lack of institutional base, and a teacher role that does not include professional development.

I would urge the commissioners to interpret their mandate for recommendations to their fullest and broadest extent. Although I heartily support the need to make cogent recommendations to the Secretary of Education and other elected officials, at both the federal and state levels, I also think it is necessary for the commissioners to think beyond laws, mandates, and regulations. I think it is important for the Commission to accept the task of challenging not only the citizenry of this country, but the professional establishments as well. I think that this can best be

accomplished by urging thought about ideas that would conceivably alter schooling in significant ways, at least as we know it today, and would certainly offend the sensibilities of those who believe it is important to work rigidly within the conventional political frameworks. Simply stated, I believe too much is at stake to operate as if significant change, change which might meet strong resistance, is out of the question.

Let me offer two or three examples of ideas I have come across of late that represent the quality of change I am thinking about. I hasten to add, however, that I am not promoting any of the ideas presented here as necessary, or even necessarily good.

- Because it is virtually impossible to ensure high levels of truly professional training for all classroom teachers, why not super-train five to seven teachers in an elementary school of 600 students, and hire trained technicians to implement most of the educational plans for children? The super-professionals would be experts not only in pedagogy, but also in related fields such as psychology and child development, and would also possess subject matter competency beyond what one normally finds in an elementary school. They would be trained at the doctoral level or its equivalent, and would supervise the technicians, who would probably be trained at the associate degree level. Not only would this take into account the economic realities that we now face, there are those who would argue that it would provide a better educational program for children.

- Why not work cooperatively with business and industry to find content experts that can help fill the desperate needs that now exist in specific areas in secondary education? It is unlikely that we can recruit true experts into teaching in secondary schools, when they can make a great deal more money working in the private domain. Cooperative fiscal arrangements with private enterprise would allow for superior secondary teachers as well as for savings in money.

- Would it be possible to distinguish the custodial and supervisory role of schools from the instructional role? Nearly everyone knows it exists, but no one seems to want to admit it. If we could separate these roles, we could develop different, less expensive programs to fulfill the custodial and supervisory role, and build more quality into instructional programs. Not only would it be cheaper, it would most likely be better.

It would be easy to go on. The point is that the type of thinking that is needed to address the problems of schools, and that includes the problems of teacher education and inservice education, transcend simple solutions to complex problems--the type of recommendation that I heard at the May 12 meeting in Atlanta.

The Recommendation

What follows is a recommendation for a recommendation. It is a recommendation that I offer to the commissioners for their discussion and judgment. It is a recommendation that is based on the assumption that significant improvement in education must start within the profession, and cannot be imposed by any form of law, mandate, or regulation. Albeit education can only be changed within a political framework, somewhere, someone must start from a substantive base, and must have a vision of what improvement should entail. I think that someone should be those who have made it their life's work to instruct children, to instruct the instructors of children, and to in a variety of other ways work in the educational establishment of this country.

This paper has made a case that teacher education in general, and inservice education specifically, is in need of major reform, but--

1. Not because it has not received public attention and scrutiny. On the contrary, teacher education has been on the firing line for the better part of recent history. Everyone recognizes that the strength of our educational system rests on the strength of our system for training teachers.

2. Not because there is no vision of what teacher education should and could look like. Strengthening teacher education has not been stymied by a lack of powerful ideas.

3. Not because there are no standards for entry into the profession. On the contrary, standards exist but they have been compromised at so many points that they have little credibility.

Rather, teacher education is in trouble because, historically, there has been no reliable, long-term support from the other education constituencies for serious efforts to strengthen it. Can teacher education be strengthened? Possibly, but only if there are dramatic shifts in how education groups operate, not just with respect to teacher education, but with respect to all educational matters.

Teacher education is just part of a larger problem, i.e., developing reasoned consensus, across education lobbies, on education issues. Currently, virtually every issue is responded to politically. For example, a few years ago a highly publicized study prompted the call for reducing average size of classes to 15 pupils. Teacher organizations immediately lauded the research (more teachers needed); school administrators and boards denounced it (too much money). The point is that value judgments about the quality of this research should have been made by the research community. Education has become so terribly and automatically politicized that a mockery has been made out of rational decision making. For instance, in teacher education we often run up against political opposition from the organized profession itself. Although one would expect the teacher organizations to support stronger standards in training and certification (they do talk a lot about professionalism), they will never support any proposal that in any way appears to impinge on "teacher welfare" territory. The barrier that stands before strength in teacher education has been created by a long history of education groups working alone toward relatively narrow objectives and often directly against each other.

I am proposing an American Education Congress.[26] I would be very

optimistic about the prospects of this Congress in getting us over this historical, political barrier to consensual policy setting and monitoring education, and specifically teacher education. Once this Congress were established, it would have the potential of developing into the needed, credible leadership voice in American education. But I am less than optimistic about the chances of getting the Congress started. Tremendous efforts would have to be made in many different domains. For instance,

1. The press for establishment of the American Education Congress would have to come from the existing vested interest groups. These groups would have to believe that the needs of the respective constituencies would be better served if they joined together for the improvement of American education. The Congress certainly should have federal financial support, but leadership must come from within education and be clearly distinct from the federal bureaucracy.

2. Initiation of the press to establish the Congress should come first from higher education (the historical home for both educational research and teacher training). But our deans of education cannot realistically press successfully until they are in line with both the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. There simply cannot be a broad alliance without these two contituencies at the core.

3. Since the source of authority for the Congress would be prestige-based only on the expertise of its members, the selection process for members of the first Congress must be absolutely above reproach. It would seem that the "search committee" would be composed of individuals who have never been tainted by involvement with any of the education groups. For example, five retired federal judges might fill the role quite well since their careers have been developed on their ability to weigh evidence objectively. Each of the organizations in the emergent Congress would submit nominations from their groups. But the judges would do the actual selection and would have the right to reject and solicit additional nominations. This sterile objectivity in the selection would be crucial--in establishing the Congress, no one would join if it were thought any group had an advantage in the membership selection process. Once the initial Congress were established, it would determine the rules of membership and pick new members. The assumption is that the expertise and prestige of the first membership would have to work to perpetuate itself.

Without a very strict objective selection process, the Congress would have no prestige and little potential for having a long-term impact. But if it were done right, the Congress could be a tremendous positive force in American education. Problems in American education could be addressed objectively, including the problems of inservice education, with public and professional confidence that the best minds were considering the best data from a wide range of sources and were considering these decisions with the goal of integrated policy setting, implementation, and monitoring. Based on my analysis, lasting reform in inservice education and strengthening of standards in teacher education must wait until all the education constituencies are cooperatively addressing the same issues.

The details of how the American Education Congress might work will be left to the Commission, and to the creativity of those who think about the idea. I would expect that this group would differ from others in that it would be recognized as the leadership in determining national education priorities. The American Education Congress would not function as a short-term, ad hoc group to develop recommendations. Rather, this would be a permanent body, and would have power based on the prestige of its membership and the importance of its purpose, i.e., bringing all education constituencies together to work on national educational problems. Power of this Congress would emanate from the respected positions each member holds in the constituent group represented, but, additionally, the Congress would accrue power by establishing a very high public profile. Although all of the traditional vested interest groups would be involved, they would have as their primary responsibility the development and enforcement of policy

that transcends the concerns of the vested interest groups alone. As such, the Congress would play a strong monitoring role as well as a leadership role. Although the Congress would deal with the problems of inservice education, they would deal with these problems only in the context of other issues that are different from but at the same time cannot be separated from inservice education. Most importantly, this Congress would provide the American public with visible evidence that the education profession is concerned about the quality of their work, and would also provide a forum to deal directly with concerns that the American people place before them.